Project Hoosier
SAFE-T News

Winter 2004

For first responders across the state, 2003 was an exciting year! Moving beyond demonstration and pilot projects and into the actual building phase, Project Hoosier SAFE-T entered the new year with lofty implementation goals. 2003 turned out to be a year distinguished by solid achievements. The SAFE-T staff has been relentless in the pursuit of achieving the project goal -- to save lives and save money.

A brief update of our yearly accomplishments follows:

SAVING LIVES
25 communications sites were active by December 31, 2003, including the five sites activated in October 2003 under the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (the VX nerve agent project governed by FEMA and SEMA). Currently, there are communication sites in the following counties: Clinton, Fountain, Franklin, Jasper, Jefferson, two sites in Johnson, Kosciusko, Lake, LaPorte, Madison, Marion, Marshall, Miami, Montgomery, Morgan, Noble, Parke, Putnam, Ripley, Switzerland, Tippecanoe, Vermillion and Vigo.

Project Hoosier SAFE-T aims to have 68 of the 126 planned sites operational by July 2004; this will provide mobile radio coverage for more than 2/3 of the state's landmass.

Two Zone Controllers were installed and upgraded for OmniLink functionality. In addition, the mobile data solution was finalized and implementation of

"25 communications sites were active as of December 31, 2003."

mobile data is anticipated for completion by spring, 2004.

SAVING MONEY
Project Hoosier SAFE-T staff has worked diligently to stretch every dollar. By using thirteen preexisting operational communications sites we avoided higher costs -- at least $150,000 per site excluding long-term operation/maintenance costs (or $500,000 including long-term operation/maintenance costs). Three originally planned sites were eliminated by optimizing communication site coverage saving $500,000-$600,000.

Other savings include:
◆ A mobile data solution that cost $750,000 less than estimated.
◆ INDOT provided facilities for Northern Smart Zone controller and performed civil work at the site saving the IPSC at least $250,000.
◆ A redesign of the system resulted in a 32-channel reduction, saving more than $400,000.

Partnerships and Outreach
To date, the SAFE-T project has 20 Memoranda of Understanding – 10 counties, 7 state agencies, 3 cities – representing thousands of first responders on the SAFE-T system.

Field coordinators have met with more than 800 local, state and federal first responders and elected officials across the state.

Saving Lives, Saving Money

SEMA/SAFE-T Awards Communities $7 Million Equipment Grants

Governor Joe Kernan has announced nearly $7 million in grants to 45 Indiana counties to help them purchase interoperable communications equipment.

The grants, part of the Department of Homeland Security/Office of Defense Preparedness 2003 state security grant program, were administered through the State Emergency Management Agency (SEMA) and the state Integrated Public Safety Commission/Project Hoosier SAFE-T.

Local communities that are a part of the "55 site" Project Hoosier SAFE-T build-out plan were eligible to apply for the grants. Grant requests totaled more than $26 million dollars, which reflects "dire need" for dollars to fund equipment purchases, according to IPSC Chair Melvin J. Carraway.

"Perhaps the largest obstacle to interoperability is money," Carraway said. "Project Hoosier SAFE-T is providing a tremendous financial benefit to local communities by providing the backbone -- the towers -- for interoperable communications with no user fees. This is a huge savings. But the fact remains that local agencies must still find a way to purchase radios and other equipment. This grant is just one way we're trying to help local communities reach their goals."

The interoperability plans submitted by the counties reflected a wide array of interoperability solutions, Carraway said, not just requests for new equipment. "We saw a great deal of creativity and vision," he said." "Most local first responders are looking ahead and thinking about tomorrow. This is very encouraging to us and lets us know we're on the right track."

"This grant is just one way we're trying to help local communities reach their goals"

-- IPSC Chair Melvin Carraway

Carraway also stressed that the IPSC staff will be aggressively pursuing similar grant opportunities in the future. While this round of funding was limited to counties where the project is actually constructing sites, "we certainly see the need for similar grant programs in the southern part of the state," Carraway said.

The grant recipients and the amount of the awards are shown at left.

Adams	$21,000
Allen	$220,000
Benton	$164,460
Boone	$264,000
Carroll	$225,000
Cass	$200,000
Clay	$21,000
Clinton	$134,000
Dearborn	$50,000
DeKalb	$210,000
Elkhart	$150,000
Fountain	$21,000
Fulton	$21,000
Hancock	$256,000
Howard	$50,000
Huntington	$215,000
Jasper	$140,000
Jefferson	$200,000
Johnson	$160,000
Kosciusko	$160,000
Lake	$100,000
Madison	$300,000
Marshall	$192,000
Miami	$198,000
Montgomery	$121,000
Newton	$21,000
Noble	$150,000
Ohio	$50,000
Porter	$150,000
Putnam	$319,000
Ripley	$272,000
St. Joseph	$212,000
Shelby	$238,000
Steuben	$97,000
Sullivan	$50,000
Switzerland	$21,000
Tippecanoe	$218,000
Tipton	$21,000
Vermillion	$21,000
Vigo	$184,000
Wabash	$200,000
Warren	$50,000
Wells	$235,000
White	$266,000
Whitley	$200,000

Radios on a Budget?

First responders across the state are talking -- SAFE-T is a great financial deal. With no user fees and infrastructure construction and maintainence provided, SAFE-T can save local communities huge amounts of money. But the fact remains that upgrading or purchasing new radios for communications interoperability can simply cost too much money -- especially for small communities or public safety agencies.

Fortunately, vendors are responding to the requests from budget-minded safety officials. Both EF Johnson and Motorola now have lower-cost radios available that are Project 25 compatible and functional on the SAFE-T system. EF Johnson's 5100 portable series and 5300 mobile series offers a high-tier radio at an affordable price. And Motorola has just rolled out the XTS 1500 -- a value-priced radio that is substantially less expensive than their 2500 or 5000 series. At about $1500 a radio, the XTS 1500 may be an alternative for local agencies looking for value.

For more information on these radios, contact your local vendor or call your SAFE-T field representatives Steve Skinner or Dave Vice (contact information on page 3) .

Many agencies continue to work to further the spirit of interoperability: INDOT provides funding and personnel; the ISP provides technical assistance and personnel; the FBI provides federal liaison and technical assistance; SEMA and CTASC provide funding and support.

The SAFE-T staff continues to work with Illinois, Kentucky, Michigan and Ohio under the Midwest Public Safety Communications Consortium (MPSCC) -- the largest multi-state communications project in the country. Currently, the MPSCC is developing an interstate interoperability plan. ■

This was a common Project Hoosier SAFE-T sight this year: Miller Building crew installing the building that houses the computer communications equipment at a tower site.

HELP!

New 24/7 Help Line to provide technical assistance

The Integrated Public Safety Commission/Project Hoosier SAFE-T staff recently established a 24-hour, 7 day Network Operations Center Help Line to help with system problems and portable and mobile radio related questions. For example, to report problems with a network circuit, to have an emergency radio ID identified, or to have a radio enabled or disabled, you can call the new Network Operations Center and <u>follow the instructions provided by the unattended answering system</u>. Immediately upon completion of your call, an IPSC staff member will be paged and your call will be returned as quickly as possible.

1-317-234-1540

This tower in Parke County is now active and providing coverage for public safety officers in the VX/Newport area.

Can We Talk?
Sharing Resources for Interoperability

SAFEComm (formerly Public Safety Wireless Network, PSWN), a joint initiative of the departments of Justice and Treasury, has identified three basic levels of interoperability: a) day-to-day interoperability for routine public safety operations; b) mutual aid interoperability for response to catastrophic events; and c) task-force interoperability for long-term collaberation among federal, state and local agencies.

One of the most significant benefits of Project Hoosier SAFE-T addresses mutual aid interoperability — the ability for multiple agencies to share their communications system. With SAFE-T, agencies can interoperate by electing to share each other's talk groups or they may use the common state and regional talk groups that have been created to enable agencies to quickly and easily communicate. The 10 statewide and 51 regional mutual aid talkgroups are available to all users on an as-needed basis. We anticipate the frequent use of these trunked talkgroups during major incidents, disasters or special events.

IPSC also recognizes the six national 800 MHz mutual (NPSPAC) frequencies mandated by the FCC to provide a common user platform. IPSC has arranged for the Indiana State Police to monitor the national NPSPAC calling channel. This should provide users visiting from other states a way to communicate within Indiana. Also, users of disparate local systems such as those in Hamilton, Howard, Vanderburgh and Steuben Counties, may also use the NPSPAC channels to readily call for help or to interoperate with users of the IPSC system.

These mutual aid options may also provide subscribers with the ability to communicate with their local dispatch center from outside the normal dispatch area. ■

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SAFE-T At Any Cost?

According to a national poll released in October at the U.S. Conference of Mayors Leadership Meeting, Americans expect and demand that their emergency first responders have all the resources, technology, and funding necessary to be completely interoperable.

The poll, conducted by the Luntz Research Companies (LRC), found that 88% of the American people believe that it is either "absolutely necessary" or "very important" to "keep interoperability functioning at 100% during a crisis." Furthermore, if those systems are found lacking and emergency response suffers as a result, poll respondents indicated that they would hold their leaders accountable.

The poll also found:

◆ 73% of the country agrees that, "The primary role of government is to protect the people from harm. If our leaders cannot guarantee that emergency response teams have the technology to meet disaster situations, they have not been doing their jobs."

◆ 67% of respondents agree that, "If the technology exists to help first responders communicate more effectively with each other, the government should invest in the technology regardless of the cost."

◆ 69% of Americans are "totally " or "mostly" convinced that, "greater interoperability between police, fire, and emergency services first responders would actually save lives."

> "(Americans) expect first responders... to have every means necessary to get the job done"

SAFE-T in a Nutshell

SAFE-T is a statewide, interoperable, wireless public safety communications system for Indiana local, state, and federal first responders/public safety officials. SAFE-T operates on a Motorola 4.1 Astro Smartzone OmniLink 800 MHz trunked voice and data system. It supports both analog and digital radios, providing 95% mobile radio coverage statewide using 126 communications sites connected by T1 lines and microwave.

SAFE-T will allow seamless, interoperable and reliable communications among local, state, and federal public safety agencies during routine, emergency and task force situations. SAFE-T will strengthen community safety and security, minimize costs and barriers to communications, and break down regionalization of systems to combat crime, natural disaster and terrorism. SAFE-T was designed to include wide voluntary participation of public safety agencies/first responders while respecting local autonomy.